

# BLACK AGENDA 2020

For too long, people in power have conspired to rig the game, forcing Black people to work twice as hard to barely get half as far in America. We are falling further behind in health and wealth, safety and well-being.

Our future can and must be different. Black communities deserve and demand thoughtful, visionary policies and practices that make us powerful in every aspect of our lives.

**Black Agenda 2020** urges elected officials and government to:

## ***Make Black people powerful in The Economy***

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By **removing policies that lock us out of good jobs** and **investing in the health and wealth** of our communities.

## ***Make Black people powerful in Our Democracy***

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By **confronting those who conspire to steal our votes** and finally building the democracy that is promised to us all.

## ***Make Black people powerful in Our Families***

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By **challenging the policies and practices that leave us living sick and dying younger** and delivering the care we need to live long and live well.



## ***Make Black people powerful in Our Society***

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By **rejecting the toxic culture of white nationalism** by calling it out at every opportunity and in front of every audience.

## ***Make Black people powerful in Our Communities***

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By **acting on the climate crisis** as a national priority before more of our communities are hit first and worst by disasters.

## ***Make Black people powerful in The Legal System***

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By **ending the use of incarceration** to solve the problems of migration, poverty, and disinvestment and **returning millions of us back to our families and communities.**

# I SUMMARY

In 2018, the Black Futures Lab launched the [Black Census Project](#), the largest survey of Black people conducted in the United States in 155 years. Over 30,000 Black people in all 50 states participated, providing insightful views and opinions about politics, society, and the opportunities and challenges facing Black communities and the nation.

**Black Agenda 2020 translates the Black Census results into a policy platform that educates elected officials, policymakers, and legislators, and challenges them to take positions that are beneficial to our communities.**

The agenda is focused squarely on mitigating the impact of racism upon every aspect of our lives—from policy to governance to private sector practices—in order to achieve justice and equality for Black people in this country.

We know that the challenges facing Black communities are complex and the solutions to those challenges require innovation, experimentation, and Black political power. We developed the Black Agenda 2020 to provide an actionable advocacy and policy agenda that will strengthen the capacity of Black communities across the United States to build independent, progressive, Black political power and get these policies passed at the local, state, and national levels.

**Black Agenda 2020 is based upon three core beliefs that shape our thinking about the solutions that are needed to lift up Black communities:**

- 1. Race matters.** We must focus on the root causes of Black inequality in order to disrupt the cycle. American law and policy is built upon anti-Black racism and white supremacy, the residual effects of which continue to derail Black lives. Race-neutral policies will not resolve structural racism; race-forward policies will.
- 2. Government must be accountable.** Government, and the people who operate it, must be held accountable for laws, policies and practices that marginalize and perpetuate disparities for Black communities and Black people. Policymakers must take action to bridge racial gaps in health, wealth, and other social outcomes by eliminating laws, policies, and practices that do harm to Black people, as well as by outlawing private sector practices that exploit racial disparities in order to boost profits.
- 3. The Black agenda is a progressive agenda.** Fundamentally, we believe that progress for Black communities requires progressive thinking. Old ideas, play-it-safe strategies, and incremental movement will not secure Black futures. We need bold, innovative ideas that aggressively drive us forward.

Each policy section presents a brief overview of the issues, references the Black Census Project’s findings where relevant, and outlines key policy solutions. This agenda is *both* a resource to help policymakers rewrite the rules that marginalize Black people *and* a tool advocates can use to hold policymakers accountable for improving Black people’s lives.

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## Make Black people powerful in The Economy

By removing policies that lock us out of good jobs and investing in the health and wealth of our communities:



- Examine the impact of slavery in the US and develop reparation proposals to repair the harm *to all diasporic* descendants of enslaved people (p.10)
- Raise job standards (p.10)
- Make housing affordable (p.11)
- Invest in K-12 education (p.12)
- Make college affordable (p.13)
- Make taxes fair and invest in economic mobility (p.13)

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## Make Black people powerful in Our Democracy

By confronting those who conspire to steal our votes and finally building the democracy that is promised to us all:



- Restore voting rights and fight voter suppression (p.15)
- Fix our broken immigration system (p.15)

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## Make Black people powerful in Our Families

By challenging the policies and practices that leave us living sick and dying younger and delivering the care we need to live long and live well:



- Establish universal care for all (p.17)
- Incentivize health and wellness over “sick care” and tackle health disparities (p.18)
- Ban discriminatory pricing and predatory marketing, and expand access to healthy foods (p.18)

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## Make Black people powerful in Our Society

By rejecting the toxic culture of white nationalism by calling it out at every opportunity and in front of every audience:



- Combat white nationalist terrorism (p.20)
- Enforce all civil statutes consistently and comprehensively (p.20)

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## Make Black people powerful in Our Communities

By acting on the climate crisis as a national priority before more of our communities are hit first and worst by disasters:



- Mitigate the climate crisis and reduce pollution (p.21)

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## Make Black people powerful in The Legal System

by ending the use of incarceration to solve the problems of migration, poverty, and disinvestment and returning millions of us back to our families and communities:



- Invest in community safety, prevention, and justice rather than the penal system (p.23)
- Hold police officers accountable for misconduct and use of force (p.24)
- Stop criminalizing poverty (p.24)
- Decriminalize marijuana (p.25)
- Forbid employers from asking job applicants to disclose criminal records (p.25)

[View the full Black Agenda 2020 here.](#)